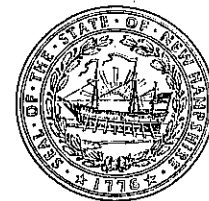




The State of New Hampshire
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Thomas S. Burack, Commissioner

January 22, 2009

The Honorable Betsi L. DeVries, Chairman
Senate Public and Municipal Affairs Committee
Legislative Office Building Room 103
Concord, NH 03301

RE: Senate Bill 29, relative to review of developments of regional impact.

Dear Chairman DeVries,

The Department of Environmental Services (DES) is pleased to offer testimony in support of Senate Bill 29, which would require regional planning commissions to develop guidelines to assist local land use boards in determining whether a development has potential for regional impact.

Senate Bill 29 strengthens local control of land use by providing local zoning and planning boards with the tools and assistance they need to adequately assess and address the potential impacts of larger-scale developments. Communities and the state at large face a difficult challenge in identifying and reducing the cumulative negative impacts of multiple, individual development projects. Providing clearer guidelines to assess the regional impact of a proposed project and greater assistance for local communities from the Regional Planning Commission in reviewing these projects will help communities better address their own concerns and goals as well as any potential regional impacts associated with a project.

Land development projects can, for example, have a direct impact on the regional transportation system. Air pollution emissions from the transportation sector comprise the single largest source of smog and ground level ozone, a respiratory irritant, in the state. The transportation sector is also on par with, and growing faster than, the electrical generation sector in terms of emissions of greenhouse gases. Improved identification and review of projects of regional impact, particularly those that have an impact on the regional transportation system, to ensure that those impacts are addressed to the extent possible is an important component in our efforts to control and reduce emissions from transportation in the state.

If you have any questions or need additional information regarding this bill, please contact me or Rebecca Ohler at 271-6749.

Sincerely,

Thomas S. Burack
Thomas S. Burack
Commissioner

cc: Senator Bette Lasky
Rep. Judith Spang